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TIF Would Support Development of New South Side Tennis Facility

The development of a state-of-the-art tennis center and sports facility in Washington Park would be supported through a \$2.94 million Tax Increment Financing (TIF) proposal introduced to City Council today by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

"As evidenced by the success of Taylor Townsend, Donald Young and the 27 players who have received full scholarships to college, XS Tennis has proven to be a training ground for top talent both on the court and in the classroom," said Mayor Emanuel. "This new, world-class facility will provide the opportunity for young people across Chicago to train, to dream and to discover their full potential."

Planned for the northwest corner of 54th and State streets, the 13.8-acre project would feature 19 outdoor courts, eight indoor courts, and parking for 160 cars. Basketball courts, training space, a pro shop, running track, fitness center, and classrooms would also be included in the 151,000-square-foot indoor portion of the complex.

"This facility will be a tremendous asset to the youth of our community, and it will also help to attract new businesses and foster continued economic growth along State Street and in Washington Park," said Alderman Pat Dowell. "Working in partnership with Mayor Emanuel, we're creating positive opportunities for residents and families, from opening new playgrounds to breaking ground on new developments like the Bronzeville Artists Lofts."

The \$9.81 million project would be built by XS Tennis Village LLC. Following project completion, the TIF assistance would be allocated in three installments to help pay for site preparation expenses. Other project funding would come from bank loans and donations. The project would create 30 temporary jobs and double XS Tennis' full-time employment to 40 positions.

XS Tennis operates the country's largest minority-owned tennis club from a leased facility on East 47th Street, where it hosts collegiate teams and provides instruction to hundreds of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students. The new facility would help double its investment in CPS programming, increasing the number of participating schools to 20 and exposing more than 4,000 CPS students to the sport of tennis.

The last two Americans to reach No. 1 in the world junior rankings, Donald Young and Taylor Townsend, learned to play at XS Tennis. XS Tennis graduates have won four of the last five Illinois high school girls' tennis championships and 100 percent have received college scholarships.

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